



# I Am a Permanent Resident...

**B4**

How Do I...Know What My Responsibilities Are?



U.S. Citizenship  
and Immigration  
Services

M-607 (05/05)

Congratulations on your status as a permanent resident of the United States (U.S.) Being a permanent resident means you have new rights and responsibilities.

All people in the U.S. must abide by U.S. law, including Federal, State, and local laws and regulations. Permanent residents who fail to abide by the laws of the U.S. may have their status taken away through legal proceedings. This fact sheet contains some important things that may help you protect and maintain your permanent resident status.

## File Tax Returns

If you are a permanent resident and you intend to maintain permanent resident status, you should file a Federal tax return with the Internal Revenue Service (IRS), and any applicable State, city, and local tax returns when required to do so. Under immigration law, a permanent resident who is required to file a tax return as a resident and fails to do so may be regarded as having abandoned status and may lose permanent resident status. If you are a permanent resident and you are considering not filing tax returns, or considering filing a nonresident alien tax return, please carefully consider the potential consequences. Please visit the IRS website at [www.irs.gov](http://www.irs.gov) for more information about taxes and tax returns.

## Get a Social Security Number

Be sure to get your social security card. A social security number is usually necessary for taxes and employment purposes. Please visit the Social Security Administration's website at [www.socialsecurity.gov](http://www.socialsecurity.gov) for more information about social security numbers and cards.

## Register With the Selective Service

If you are a male between the ages of 18 and 26, be sure to register with the selective service. Please visit the Selective Service website for more information at [www.sss.gov](http://www.sss.gov).

## Keep Your Permanent Resident Card Up to Date

Be sure to file to renew your permanent resident card before it expires. For more information about renewing your permanent resident card, please see **Fact Sheet B-2**, or visit our website.

## If You Plan on Traveling Outside of the U.S.

While permanent residence normally means the ability to travel freely outside the U.S. and return, there are limitations. Lengthy absences, particularly if they involve work or taking up residence abroad, can lead to abandonment and loss of permanent residence status, or delayed eligibility for naturalization. Absence for a year or more can be particularly problematic.

You may be able to reduce the risk of abandonment by filing for a "reentry permit," using **Form I-131, Application for Travel Document**, before you depart. Under more limited circumstances, you may be able to protect your eligibility for naturalization by filing a **Form N-470, Application to Preserve Residence for Naturalization Purposes**, before you depart.

Criminal convictions can trigger special inadmissibility grounds when you travel internationally. If you have criminal convictions, you should carefully consider the ramifications before you travel.

## Where can I find information about life in the U.S., including information about my other rights and responsibilities as a permanent resident?

Adjusting to your new life in the U.S. and learning about your responsibilities, rights, and privileges will take time. In order to help you, we have created **M-618, Welcome to the United States: A Guide for New Immigrants**. It contains basic information to help you settle in the United States and find what you and your family need for everyday life. It also summarizes important information about your legal status and about agencies and organizations that provide documents or essential services you may need. You can download *Welcome to the United States: A Guide for New Immigrants* from our website. The guide is available in English, Spanish, Chinese, Vietnamese, Tagalog, Korean, Russian, Arabic, French, Portuguese, and Haitian Creole.



## Key Information

Key forms referenced in this Fact Sheet	Form #
Welcome to the United States: A Guide for New Immigrants	M-618
Application for Travel Document	I-131
Application to Preserve Residence for Naturalization Purposes	N-470

### USCIS

- **On the Internet at: [uscis.gov](http://uscis.gov)**

For more copies of this Fact Sheet, or information about other citizenship and immigration services, visit our website. You can also download forms, e-file some applications, check the status of an application, and more. It's a great place to start!

If you don't have Internet access at home or work, try your library. If you can't find what you need, call customer service.

- **Customer Service: 1-800-375-5283**

- Hearing Impaired TDD Customer Service: 1-800-767-1833

**Disclaimer:** This Fact Sheet is a basic guide to help you become generally familiar with our rules and procedures. For more information, or the law and regulations, see our website. Immigration law can be complex, and it is impossible to describe every aspect of every process. You may wish to be represented by a licensed attorney or by a nonprofit agency accredited by the Board of Immigration Appeals.

### Other U.S. Government Services—click or call

<b>In general</b>	<a href="http://www.firstgov.gov">www.firstgov.gov</a>	1-800-333-4636
<b>U.S. Department of State</b>	<a href="http://www.state.gov">www.state.gov</a>	1-202-647-6575
<b>U.S. Social Security</b>	<a href="http://www.ssa.gov">www.ssa.gov</a>	1-800-772-1213
<b>U.S. Selective Service</b>	<a href="http://www.sss.gov">www.sss.gov</a>	1-847-688-6888
<b>U.S. Taxes</b>	<a href="http://www.irs.gov">www.irs.gov</a>	1-800-829-1040

